

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SSM-03 AID-05 IGA-02 MC-02 ACDA-07 OMB-01
TRSE-00 IO-13 /089 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:MDRAPER:JFC
APPROVED BY NEA - MR. DAY
NEA/P - MR. SHERMAN
-----044448 140121Z /70

P 140014Z JUL 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 163682

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PDIP, IS, LE

SUBJECT: HA'ARETZ REPORT OF U.S. REQUEST OF ISRAEL TO
PROVIDE ARMS TO LEBANESE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS

REF: TEL AVIV 4972, BEIRUT 3327 (NOTAL), DAMASCUS 4388
(NOTAL)

1. AS BEST WE CAN PIECE TOGETHER HERE, WITHOUT DRAWING
ATTENTION TO THE MATTER, HA'ARETZ CORRESPONDENT MARCUS
FILED A STORY BASED ON NEW YORK TIMES STORY THAT THE U.S.
WAS CONSULTING WITH CONGRESS OVER POSSIBLE MILITARY SUPPLY
ARRANGEMENT FOR LEBANON. MARCUS EVIDENTLY SPECULATED THAT
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THE U.S. WOULD BE SHARING ITS THINKING WITH ISRAEL ON A
U.S. PROGRAM FOR LEBANESE ARMY. FBIS TRANSLATION OF
PRINTED HA'ARETZ ARTICLE COULD BE READ AS EITHER THE U.S.
ASKED ISRAEL TO SUPPLY WEAPONRY TO THE LEBANESE "MILITIAS"
OR THAT THE U.S. WAS SEEKING ISRAELI PERMISSION FOR THE
U.S. TO DO SO. A Wafa REPORT THE FOLLOWING DAY INDICATED
THAT THE U.S. WAS GOING TO SEND VIA ISRAEL WEAPONS TO THE

CHRISTIAN MILITIAS IN SOUTH LEBANON.

2. OUR CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE HERE IS TO DENY THE DISTORTED HA'ARETZ STORY AND ITS SUBSEQUENT MANIFESTATIONS AND, IF ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ISRAEL ABOUT A U.S. MILITARY PROGRAM FOR LEBANON, TO SAY, "I HAVE NOTHING ON THAT".

3. FOLLOWING IS CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE ON QUESTIONS ABOUT REBUILDING THE LEBANESE ARMY: "I CAN CONFIRM THAT THERE HAVE BEEN PRELIMINARY CONSULTATIONS WITH THE CONGRESS ON THE QUESTION OF ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON, INCLUDING IN PARTICULAR THE POSSIBILITY OF ASSISTANCE TO HELP REBUILD THE LEBANESE NATIONAL ARMY. ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON DID DISCUSS THIS MATTER IN CLOSED SESSION WITH TWO SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE. NO DECISIONS HAVE BEEN MADE OR CONCLUSIONS REACHED WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH. THIS IS IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR POLICY OF SUPPORTING PRESIDENT SARKIS AND THE INDEPENDENCE, UNITY, AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF LEBANON."

4. FOR DAMASCUS: YOU SHOULD ASSURE DAOUDY THAT THERE IS NO TRUTH TO STORY HE CITED AND THAT THE U.S. HAS NOT RPT NOT ASKED ISRAEL TO FURNISH ARMS TO THE LEBANESE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS IN SOUTH LEBANON.
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5. OTHER ACTION POSTS: IF YOU BELIEVE THERE IS ANY CHANCE HOST GOVERNMENTS MIGHT CONSIDER CREDIBLE THE HA'ARETZ STORY AND ITS SUCCESSORS, YOU ARE AUTHORIZED AT YOUR DISCRETION TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE AND MAKE THE RECORD CLEAR. VANCE

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Message Attributes

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